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THE
Bishop of *BANGOR*'s
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the
House of LORDS,

On *January 30. 1720.*

[REDACTED]

Die Martis 31^o Januarii, 1720.

ORdered by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament Assembled, That the Thanks of this House be, and are hereby, given to the Lord Bishop of *Bangor*, for the Excellent Sermon by him Preach'd before this House yesterday, in the *Abby-Church, Westminster*; and he is hereby desired to cause the same to be forthwith Printed and Published.

*W^m Coeper,
Cler' Parliamentor'.*



16.

A
SERMON
Preach'd before the
Lords Spiritual and Temporal
IN
PARLIAMENT Assembled,
AT THE
Collegiate Church
OF
St. Peter's Westminster,

On *Monday January 30, 1720-21.*

Being the ANNIVERSARY of
the MARTYRDOM of King
CHARLES the First.

By BENJAMIN, Lord Bishop of
BANGOR.

LONDON:

Printed for JAMES KNAPTON at the *Crown*,
and TIMOTHY CHILDE at the *White Hart*,
in *St. Paul's Church Yard.* MDCCXX.

SERMON

Preached before the
Honble Spirituall and Temporall
IN
Parliament Assembled
AT THE
College Church



By the Revd. Mr. Henry
the Martyrdom of
CHARLES THE FIRST

Delivered at the College Church
of St. Martin in the
Vineyard

By the Revd. Mr. Henry
Prinsep, Secretary to the
Council of the University
of Cambridge

(2)

I *Ep. to the Cor. X Ch. the former Part of the 11th Verse.*

Now all these Things happened unto Them for Examples.



O U will easily perceive, from my choosing these Words as an Introduction to what I am now going to say, That it is my Design to make use of that Black and Unhappy Part of our *English* History, which we are commanded by Authority to call to mind on *this Day*, in such a manner, as to make such Observations upon

at

upon it, and draw such Lessons from it, as may be of most service to our selves, in order to prevent and avoid those Things which *happened unto* our Forefathers, *for Ensamples* to Us their Posterity : just as the Unhappineffes and Wickednesses of the *Jews* in former Ages, are here in the Text set before the Eyes of their Followers by St. *Paul*.

To open unnecessarily any old Wounds that are now closed up, and make them bleed afresh ; To widen any that are now open, and to inflame them still more and more : These Things are as far from my Inclination and Temper, as They are contrary to All that I know of Religion. I had much rather pour Oyl into Any That remain, and apply nothing but soft and healing Medicines : Nay, if it were possible, I would cast a Veil
over

over every Mark of past Infamy, or even Imperfection, on all Sides ; were it not for fear, We might at the same time lose some of the Best Lessons and most Useful Observations for our own Conduct.

To run with Violence against Any One sort of Men now in being : To fix the Guilt of *That* upon All of one General Denomination, which All the Chief of them detested by a public Remonstrance at the Time of the Transaction : To lay *That* upon the *Generality* of a Nation, which even in the *First Zeal* against it, was declared by public † Authority to be the Work of a *Few* at that Time possess'd of Power : Or, To load with all possible Aggravations the unjustifiable Proceedings on *One* Side only, and to clear the *Other* of every thing that looks

† Proclam. King CHARLES II. 1660.

like Guilt : These are Points, which common Justice and Equity (not to mention Compassion and Charity) forbid Us to do.

But to teach Our selves to avoid what we rightly blame in Others ; to take Care that True and Just Principles of Public Good do not suffer in the Esteem of Men, thro' the Mistakes or Wickedness of Such as were Strangers to them, or only pretended to make use of them ; and that the Memory of *True Patriots* may not be cursed, for the Sake of the *Infamy* of *Usurpers* ruling by mere Power and Arm'd Force : To learn, from the Review of former Unhappineffes, every Thing that can be of Use to help Us in the Preventing Any the like Miseries for the Time to come, or the Curing any present Evils : *These*, and the like, are *Points* worthy of Persons concern'd

cern'd for the Good of their Country ; and Such, as may render this Fast, not a *Fast for Strife and Debate*, nor merely a Fast for *Shame and Reproach* ; but a Day of Useful Instruction in the Paths which lead to Public Peace, and the Establishment of all that is valuable in Humane Society.

The main Points which *this Day* recalls to our Minds, I shall connect together in the following Manner, in order to introduce the Observations I design : --- That there was, in the Days of our Forefathers to which we now look back, a Zeal in the Representatives of *England*, in Parliament assembled, to oppose Every Arbitrary Encroachment upon the *Legal Liberties and Properties* of the Subject : --- That, by degrees, and by the Concurrence of many Accidents, the Passions, and Rage,

and Revenge of *Some*, by the help of mutual *Provocations*, mix'd themselves too much in the Contest : — That Ambitious and Designing and Desperate Men took occasion from hence to set their own Machines on work : — That the various and contradictory Schemes of *Belief* and *Worship*, embraced at that Time, (All equally honour'd with the Name of *Religion*,) were call'd in to heat the Imaginations of Men, and to help forward the common Ruine : — That at length this ended in the Destruction of the *Legal Constitution* ; in confounding even all Appearance of Freedom in what remain'd of a *Parliament* ; in an *Usurp'd Power*, supported by *Force* against the Consent of the Nation, and with the Abhorrence of the greatest Friends to *Legal Liberty* ; and in the *Murder* of the
 KING,

KING, against the Voices of *All*, but Such as then began to find themselves to have no Security but from an *Arm'd Force*: A *Fact*, which as I truly detest; and am led to do so by all the *Principles* I know any thing of: so, if any Words of mine could aggravate it, consider'd in all its Circumstances, They never should be wanting. These are the Main Parts of the History now before Us; upon which I shall proceed to build some *Observations*. And,

I. I shall take leave to Warn against One Use which may sometimes have been made of *this* Part of our History; and That is, The arguing from the Bad Event of Things, contrary to the Wishes and Designs of the Best and Wisest Men, against all such Opposition to *Illegal Encroachments*, and *Arbitrary*

Proceedings, as first open'd the Scene. For, As, in *Argument*, nothing is more *injudicious*, than to plead against *One thing*, because *Another thing*, of a quite different Nature, succeded to It, thro' the wicked Designs of some Men, and the unaccountable Concurrence of a thousand *Accidents*: So, in *Political Affairs*, nothing can be more *fatal*, than to draw a *Conclusion*, from such Events, which must lay the Foundation of Uninterrupted and Hopeless Slavery. The Nature and Reason of Things abhors such an *Inference*; which would at once take away all the Right of a *Free Nation*; and make their Meeting together in *Parliament*, only a more *Solemn Form of Absolute Submission* to whatever the *Will* of Another shall lay upon them. All in the Administration of Government, who are

Wise,

Wise, would not wish to have such a Temptation to *Evil* laid in their way : *All*, who are *Good*, would even oppose and prevent such a dangerous Piece of *Servile Subjection* : and *All*, who are *Bad* enough to wish for it, deserve for that very Reason to have the *Terror* of the *Contrary* before their Eyes ; that so, what They will not refrain from for *Conscience*, yet for *Wrath's* Sake may be avoided. Let *that* Lesson, therefore, of *Good*, remain untouched, which under an *Administration*, by which the *Liberties* and *Laws* of the *Country* are preserv'd unviolated, can do no hurt ; and under *One*, which assumes the Power of acting *without* or *against* Law, is of Absolute Necessity to prevent *Public Ruine*.

THERE is the less Occasion for *Argument* upon *this Head*, because
the

the *Best* of *Those* *Historians*, and *O-*
ther *Writers*, who have shewn the
 greatest Warmth against what fol-
 lowed, yet have been far from con-
 demning those *Beginnings* of Zeal for
 the *Public*, which tended in their na-
 tural Consequences to the lasting
 Good of the *King* and the *Whole*
Body; and could not have been
 diverted from attaining that End,
 but by the Unreasonableness and
 private Views of such on each Side,
 as had nothing less at Heart than
 either the *Greatness* of their *King*, or
 the *Good* of their *Country*: Two
 Things, which in our Constitution
 are so happily join'd together, that
 They can never be put asunder.

And what is still a Greater
 Consolation, is, that, tho' such *Lef-*
sons of *Subjection* may have been
 taught by Persons of Leisure, little
 vers'd in the Affairs of humane Life,
 yet

yet We have seen with Pleasure that All Sorts, and *Parties*, (if I must use that Word,) of Men amongst Us, have, (to their Honour be it spoken) in their several turns, and as constantly as any Opportunity offer'd it self, openly and zealously made opposition to Any Attempts, which They either knew, or imagin'd, to affect the known Laws and Liberties of their Country. Nay, it must be acknowledg'd, that *None* have shewn more of this Spirit in *Parliament*, than *Those* who have seem'd fearful of giving too great Encouragement to *Liberty*, for fear of the ill Consequences of it : And it ought ever to be accounted one Part of their great Glory, that, *out of Parliament*, in the greatest and happiest Struggle for *Public Liberty*, that the present Generation, or perhaps any other, ever was witness

ness to, *Their Part* was great and remarkable, in opposing the Encroachments (of *Arbitrary Power*, and even in inviting an Arm'd Force to make that Opposition successful: The only appearing Difference between *Them* and *Others*, if we may judge by *Practice*, being This, that, whilst *They* are Both equally jealous of Every suppos'd Attempt against their Liberties, the *One* sort may imagine *That* to be so, which the *Other* do not; and the *One* sort may be fearful lest the Defense of their own *Practice* should impress too great a Sense of *Liberty* upon the Minds of Men, whilst the *Other* may think it best not only to vindicate what is in it self praise-worthy, but to scatter the Light of *Legal Liberty* into all Corners of the Land, and to inspire the Love of it into the Heart of Every Subject.

If

IF We therefore, consider such Lessons of Submission with regard to the Practice of the Wisest and Best on *all Sides* ; We may see how *Vain*, as well as how *Reproachful* on All equally, they are : If we consider them in a *Political* Light ; They present Us with nothing but Certain Slavery without any possible *Chance* for the contrary : If We consider them in the way of *Argument* merely ; They are no better than *This*, That We ought not to do what is necessary for the preservation of a Whole Nation, because it may happen that We may be ruined afterwards in another way ; or, That a Man ought not to save himself from present Imminent Death, because it is possible that in the Struggle He may put himself into a *Fever* which may afterwards prove mortal ;

tal ; Or, That a *Good Thing* ought not to be attempted, because a *Bad Thing* may possibly happen some Time afterwards, which is neither the natural Consequence of the *Former*, nor could be foreseen by the *Wise*st of Men. This leads us to observe,

II. THE Unreasonableness of casting the Reproach of this Day's Fact, and of every Thing before and after it, upon the Principles of *True Liberty*, in general ; and upon the *Defenders* of them : Whereas it will appear, upon a serious Consideration, (however it may sound at first hearing,) That, of *all Men*, *These* are led by their *Principles*, if they understand them, to an utter and settled Disapprobation of what They have the Reproach of favouring.

vouring. For, what is the *Liberty* contended for, by all Men of Honesty, and Understanding? Not Licentiousness: Not a Right to overturn *Laws* and *Constitutions*, whenever Passion or Rage dictate, and the favourable Opportunity of *Power* offers it self: Much less, a *Licence*, under Pretense of *Liberty*, to destroy all Freedom in Parliament; to set up an Arbitrary Power, and maintain it by Force of Arms. Nothing of all this; but every thing contrary to it. It is the *Liberty* which results from being governed by *Laws* made by *Consent*; the *Liberty* which results from these *Laws* being settled in such a manner, that the Innocent shall always know their own Defense from Injuries, and even the most *Guilty* know before-hand

upon what their Guilt shall be founded : It is the secure Enjoyment of *Property*, and *Privileges* granted by *Laws*, free from every thing that looks like Violence.

THE *End* of these *Laws* is to guard against the worst of all worldly Evils, *Arbitrary Power*, in whatsoever Shapes or Degrees it may pretend to shew itself, and upon whatsoever *Pretext* it may found such Pretensions ; to preserve Judgment and Justice from the Influences of Passion and Private Resentment ; and Punishment it self, in the Case even of the meanest Subject, from becoming Cruelty. A Scheme of happiness, not known in the Nations round about Us, either under *Absolute Monarchies*, or *Republics* ; depending, one would judge

judge from hence, entirely upon the Nature of that *Mixt Form* under which We live.

BUT what was the Case now before Us ? We find plainly that a *Fact*, as Shocking in it self, as it was opposite to the Temper of *Englishmen*, and contrary to the Maxims of the *English Government*, could not be so much as attempted, till the Freedom of *Parliament* was totally destroy'd ; the *Balances* which keep our Government in an even Situation, torn asunder ; and an *Arm'd Force* made the support of what remain'd of *Civil Government*.

THIS Proceeding is much more agreeable to the Maxims of Those who think and teach (if any such still remain) that *Arbitrary Power* is the best and fittest for the Government of Mankind ; than to the Sentiments of Others of a contrary
Judg-

Judgment. For in this Case, All of *Legislation*, as well as of *Government*, that remain'd, was influenced and supported by mere *Force*, which is always *Absolute*. Nay, The Crime and Evil of *Usurpation* it self, upon their own *Scheme*, is so qualified in process of Time, that *Prescription*, or *Possession* maintain'd for a Term of years, relieves Them at length of very much of their *First Abhorrence* of it. Whereas, No Length of Time, No Tenure of *Prescription*, can reconcile the minds of Those who understand what *Legal Liberty* is, to the total Destruction of a *Legal Constitution*, and to the Settlement of mere Power. The very Thing which, at the End of some Years, would have comforted Others, if a long Possession of Arbitrary Power had continued amongst Us, seems to

to *Them* so big with *Public Misery*, and *Calamity*, that it heightens and inflames their Detestation of all Proceedings which were thought necessary to such an Evil: an Evil, which, if one Cunning and Daring *Usurper* had been succeeded by *Another*, might probably have cleav'd to *Us*, and our Seed for ever; and have come at length to have been the Subject of *Fulsom Panegyric* to All the Admirers of *Uncontrollable Power*; and left to be lamented in *private* only by Such as *Those* whose *Principles* are sometimes reproach'd as if They favour'd what is absolutely inconsistent with them. This leads Us

III. To observe the perfect *Consistency* which there is between a well-grounded Disapprobation of that Scene of Things, which We
this

this Day lament ; and a settled and hearty Approbation of that *Great Transaction* in our own Days, upon which the present Establishment of our *Constitution* is founded. There may be Those, who are so little used to consider a Cause thoroughly, and to pursue it thro' all its Consequences, that They may be surpriz'd to hear a Thing so distant from what they have been used to. But yet it will be found certainly true, that *These two Things* are so far from being *Inconsistent* ; that the very Same Principles which lead Men of Consideration to Approve the *Latter*, direct and influence Them to Disapprove the *Former*. For Instance, The Maxim that there is in the Whole Nation a Right to preserve Themselves and their *Constitution of Government*, from
 Ruine,

Ruine, is so far from implying in it, that a *Particular Party* of a Nation has a *Right* to possess itself of the *Governing Power* by *Force*, or *Trick*; or to tear in Pieces a *Legal Constitution*; or to commit *Acts of Violence* against Every Branch of that *Constitution*, as well as against *Private Men*: It is so far, I say, from implying these things, that it strongly implies, and inforces the *Contrary*. As therefore, in the *One Case*, there was the *Concurrence* of All Ranks, and All the Differing Sorts, amongst Us, against all the *Arm'd Force* in the Land, contending whose Cries and Calls should be loudest for Relief; and in the *Other*, the *Conjunction* of a *Few*, secur'd only by their having all the *Arm'd Force*, then in being, on their Side: As, on the *One Hand*, the *Concurrence* of the *Whole* was directly and truly design'd for the *Preservation* of our *Legal Constitution*;

D

tution ; and, on the *Other* hand, the Views of particular Men were to be carry'd on by the *Destruction* of that Constitution, and the extinguishing all Freedom of *Parliament* : As the *One* ended in the antient Form of *Legal Government*, and a stronger Establishment of the *Rights* of *Subjects*, and *Parliaments* ; and the *Other* in a direct Avowal of *Arbitrary Power*, where any of the Legal Rights or Privileges, belonging to *Parliament* or *People*, stood in the Way : As there are These, and the like, *Essential*, and Irreconcilable Differences between the *One* and the *Other* ; (too many to be now enumerated ;) it is evident that the *Proceedings* of the *Whole Nation*, in the *One* Case, stand approv'd and supported by the *same Principles*, which lead most effectually to the *Condemnation* of the *Proceedings* of a *Part* possess'd of *Power*, in the *Other* Case. But, IV. As

IV. As *these Things* happen'd to our Forefathers for *Ensamples*; so let Them be *Ensamples* to Us, not only to chuse what was Good in the *Conduct* of *Some*, but to avoid what was Evil in *Others*, and what indeed hindred all the Good which was propos'd. The *Great Lesson* is, That on all Sides Men suffer not their Personal Resentments, Passions, Disappointments, or Private Interests, to enter into their Contests, where the Public is concern'd: At least, to guard against their Influences, as much as it is possible for Humane Nature to do. I say, *As much as possible*, well knowing how hard a Lesson this is, and how seldom the Practice of it is to be hoped for. There is something in *Self-Love* so deeply rooted, that Private Interests and Private Views have often a silent and effectual Influence upon Men, even when their *Mouvemens* are not distinctly felt within. Nor would I be un-

derstood to insinuate that it is always impossible that *These* should happen to fall in with what is truly for the *Public Good*. But this is by Accident ; and it being really the Satisfaction of our *Passions*, which gives *Life* to all Proceedings in which *These* mix themselves, the *Experiment* upon this Account is always dangerous. For the Nature and Operation of *These* Principles is such, that They will obscure or discolour the brightest *Object* ; They will make *That* appear *reasonable*, which is *profitable*, or agreeable to some Present View ; and throw a Disgrace upon whatever does not tend to satisfy Themselves. Take away *These* ; and *Public Good* appears Naked and open to every Eye, free from all Difficulties and Embarrassments ; But let *These* enter in their full Strength ; and *Public Good* becomes only *Another Word* for our own *Private Views* and *Passions*. But of All Principles of
Action

Action in humane Nature, *Revenge* for Personal Injuries is seen to make the greatest Havock in all Public Disputes and Disorders. For, as it is naturally *blind* against all Light, and *Deaf* to all Argument; so, it can be Sated by Nothing but some one particular *Sacrifice* which it proposes; after which is compassed, it generally ends in Shame and Repentance. The Power of these Principles is known to be so great in Civil Affairs, that one main Foundation of all *Civil Government*, is, That Men ought not to be the Avengers of their own Personal Injuries; And, this Fundamental Maxim of *Society* is sacredly observ'd through the Whole Tenor of our *English Laws*; and never transgress'd or neglected but upon Extraordinary Occasions.

How terrible was the Force of *These* seen to be in the Days of our *Fathers*? Especially, when they were set on Fire by that *mistaken* Zeal,

Zeal, (the true and genuine *Enthusiasm*,) which at once *inflames* and *consecrates* the *Passions* ; at once actuates them into *Rage* to all extremities, and sanctifies that *Rage* by the sacred Names of *God* and *Religion* : By which it came to pass that the Cause of every heated Imagination became the Cause of *GOD* ; that whatever Men thought well of, in Religious Affairs, for Themselves, They came to think it their Duty to force upon Others ; and that *Mutual Toleration* was declared by Some, who once wanted it themselves, the *Greatest* of all the *Monsters* which those unhappy Times brought forth.

WE have much to learn from these Things ; and much to avoid. Let us imitate all that Zeal of our *Forefathers* for our *Legal Constitution*, which was visibly design'd, and naturally tended, to prevent future Encroachments of Power, either *against*, or *without*, Law:
And

And let us fly far from all those *Methods* which naturally paved the Way to the *Loss* of all that *Freedom* which they pretended to secure. Let us value our Liberties, as Honest Men: Not only for the Pleasure and Security They afford to Ourselves; but as a *Trust* repos'd in Us for our *Posterity*, much more *Sacred* and *Important* than Any other Legacy of this World, that we can leave them. Let not our *Passions* be our first Instructors in any Step of our *Public Conduct*: But let them Themselves be instructed and guided by our *Reason*. Let our *Love* to what we justly approve, and chuse for ourselves, in *Religion*, engage Us to such Charity and Forbearance towards Others, as may demonstrate our Gratitude for our own Happiness; and our deep Sense that Whatsoever we may account the *Cause* of God is to be promoted by None but the *Methods* of God.

IN

IN a Word, As *Britons*, enjoying the Blessings of a *Constitution* unknown to all the Countries around Us, even where the Word *Liberty* is still us'd; and, As *Christians*, enjoying the Light and Liberty of the *Gospel*; Let us secure, as much as can be, the Repose and Comforts of this present Life by valuing and preserving that *Form of Government* which administers so much Good to Us; and let Us press, with unwearied Steps, to the Rewards of the *Life which is to come*, (free from all the Vicissitudes and Confusions of the happiest Kingdoms of this World) by walking worthy of our *Holy Vocation*, and adorning our Profession by a truly *Christian* and unblameable Conversation.

4 OCT 58
Which God grant, for the Sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, &c.

F I N I S.

